



Black Girls CODE

CODE Club Philadelphia



Related Goals

Location: US (Philadelphia)

Target group: Middle and high school girls from under-represented groups.

Budget: \$25,000 a year (2020-2022). Due to the pandemic, a no-cost extension has been granted.

When girls don't see themselves represented in their classrooms or in the fields in which they have an interest, they often choose a different path. Black Girls CODE provides this important representation and also delivers programs in a culturally sensitive and supportive way. Their programs effectively redirect this pattern of under-representation and empower the next generation of female tech leaders. BGC has a broad impact on a large number of girls by introducing them to STEM and computer science, fostering their interest and skill building, and ultimately creating a community of learners and a network of support and resources on which students can lean.

Goals

The CODE Club in Philadelphia will be launched in 2022. It will:

- Provide students with a unique experience to acquire valuable coding and STEM skills.
- Position these students to secure high-powered career positions in the growing technology sector, creating a pathway for them to become the future leaders and innovators in the technology field.

Challenges

- During the Covid-19 pandemic,, Black Girls CODE postponed all in-person events as of March 2020. BGC was able to rapidly roll out their virtual learning opportunities with “Black Girls CODE Goes Virtual!”. Throughout the year, BGC staff carefully and creatively weighed options to provide educational and fun STEM activities and tools to keep students and the broader community, connected and engaged with one another.
- In 2020, Black Girls CODE held an impressive **170** virtual events with more than **9,500** participants.
- Due to the pandemic, BGC was not able to establish the necessary school and coaching network in Philadelphia to launch a new coding club.

Future plans

In 2021, the Elsevier Foundation planned to support a CODE Club in Philadelphia, offering a series of interactive sessions throughout the duration of this 4-6 week summer program that includes mobile app development, web development, and game development. However, the impact of the pandemic meant that program had to be delayed. The Elsevier Foundation has granted Black Girls CODE a no-cost extension until 2023.

The program will provide participants with intensive training sessions to develop skills sets in one or more coding technologies. In addition to classroom instruction, office hours will also be available for participants throughout the duration of the program.

“Over the last three years with BGC, I have become fluent in languages like HTML, CSS, and Javascript. I have been taught community skills, how to work with team members, and fostered self-care between my coding sessions. BGC has given me confidence in coding with girls and boys my age or older, made me more open to opportunities/classes involving technology, and has given me the skill set I need to launch my own business ”

— SYDNEY BROWN, BGC student. As the CODE club has not yet launched, the quote is from a current BGC student in the Future Tech Boss program. Sydney uses technology as a vessel to empower local entrepreneurs in her community. After participating in BGC workshops and garnering new skills, the 16-year-old launched her own web design business creating websites for small businesses in the Greater Detroit Area.

Primary outcome

Offer an effective, culturally-sensitive, community focused STEM curriculum - and additionally provide soft skills training and core community building to foster deeper personal transformation, professional growth, and community ties for girls of color.

Overview

[Black Girls CODE](#) is devoted to showing the world that Black girls can code, and do so much more. By reaching out to the community through technology focused programs and events, Black Girls CODE introduces computer programming and technology to girls from underrepresented communities in technology areas such as web design, robotics, gaming, mobile app development and more. Black Girls CODE works to close the digital divide while simultaneously addressing the gender gap prevalent in the tech industry which comprises less than 20% women and only 3% women of color. There is an urgent need to engage larger numbers of women from communities of color in Information Technology careers. BGC seeks to inspire and support many more girls, from economically disenfranchised communities to find clear pathways out of poverty for themselves and, very often, for their families.

The mission of Black Girls CODE is to directly address the issue of racial equity by providing girls of color with an opportunity for early exposure to STEM focused technical careers, and by providing role models from the pool of existing female technologists to “shift the equation” and to feed the pipeline creating the next generation of leaders and builders in technology.

